(b) if so, the number of meetings held after May 18, 1988 between the two countries and to what extent the differences have been narrowed down ; and

(c) whether any concrete formulae have been reached for a settlement ; if not, at what stage the matter rests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) Eight rounds of official-level talks have been held so far between India and China to discuss subjects of mutual concern, including the boundary question.

(b) No official talks have been held to discuss the boundary question since the Eights Round of November, 1987.

(c) Both India and China are agreed that a settlement of the boundary question should be arrived at through peaceful negotiations and that, meanwhile, Peace and tranquility should be maintained all along the border.

Indo-Pak talks on Afghan Situation

4465. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Pakistan made efforts in dispelling misunderstanding of each other's perceptions towards a solution in the Afghan problem ;

(b) is so, whether Pakistan and Indian delegations met at Islamabad during May, 1988 ; and

(c) if so, to what extent India's efforts to dispel Pak fears and misunderstanding had been successful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) While Pakistani leaders have said they could understand Indian concerns, they have also been critical of India's policy.

Government Employees sent for Training Abroad

4466. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) what was the number of Government employees of various Ministries/Departments as well as autonomos body organisations, who were sent abroad for training purposes and were in the age-group of (i) 31-40; (ii) 41-50; and (iii) 51-60 (age-group-wise and office-wise) ; and what was the amounts spent as on 31st March, 1988 on this account;

(b) whether Government are aware that in majority of cases the employees sent were above 50 years and even after training they serve not more than five to six years ; if so, what are the reasons that the Government do not send employees for training from the age group of 31-40 in the first instance and then from the age group of 41-50 only, who can serve the Government for more than 10 to 15 years after such training ; and

(c) whether Government propose to encourage the age groups of 31-40 and 41-50 in this respect in the near future and put a ban on age group 51-60 for the said purpose of training abroad ; if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The information sought is not centrally

available. Further no central allocation of funds is made by the Union Government for sending government employees of various Ministies/ Departments, Autonomous bodies and Parliament Secretariat, and expenditure in this regard is incurred by the concerned organisation.

(b) and (c) According to guidelines issued by Department of Personnel and Training, officers above 45 years of age are not, ordinarily, to be sent on long-term training courses abroad. For short-term training courses, the upper age limit prescribed is 52 years. Thus the age groups 31-40 and 41-50 are the ones from which officers are generally sent abroad for training.

Export of Software Computers

4467. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have announced new packages for the export of software computers from India ; and

(b) if so, what other facilities have been provided by Government for computer manufacturers to increase production and also for the export of computers to other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN): (a) In addition to the announcement of the Computer Policy in 1984 and the Policy on Computer Software Export, Software Development and Training in December, 1986, the Government has taken the following measures for the promotion of software export from India:

(i) A set of simplified procedures have been evolved for setting up of Joint venture abroad and the blanket permit by the Reserve Bank of India for meeting the marketing expenses for export oriented projects.

(ii) A Software Development Agency has been set up in the Department of Electronics for the promotion of software development and software export.

(iii) Government has decided to set up software technology parks for software export using satellite links. It is proposed to set up three technology parks one each at Bhubneswar, Pune and Bangalore during the first phase and at Chandigarh during the next phase. Such centres would cater to the requirements of software development units for 100 per cent export.

(iv) Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Electronics and the Office of the International Trade and Investment (OITI) of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a Strategic Planning Study for an Indo-American Software Trade Network between Pune and Boston has been signed. This study will work out the plan of action to establish software export to US market.

(v) The Department of Electronics have launched extensive software export promotion campaign. Under this programme software seminars are being organised abroad to project Indian Capabilities. Government is also participating in the software exhibitions/fairs abroad.

(b) The following facilities have been provided by the Government to computer manufacturers to increase the production:

(i) Liberal import of design and drawing/technology is being considered favourably.